

NORTHWEST TEMPE COMMUNITY PLAN
OPEN HOUSE – Wednesday February 23, 2005
Westside Multigenerational Building; 715 W. 5th Street; Tempe
Meeting Summary Notes

Meeting Participants:

Bill Butler
Mare Schumacher
Robert Sandstedt
Joe Gibbs
Bobby Dempsey
Marla Trayer
Jenny Lucier
Jack Phillabaum
Edward O. Wong
Cecillia Fletcher
Suzanne Brewer
Arnold Ruiz
Dan W. Frank
Noah S. Johnson-Greenough
Karyn Gitlis
Eduarda Yates
Mohamond Abdirazuk
Barbara L. Moularo
Pauline Larson
Grace Wagner
Raquel Gutierrez
Glenn Brown
Matt Green
Bob Gray
Angela Zubbs
Mark Olsen

Gary Crandell
Larry Lynch
Kirby Spitler
Trevor Barger
Liz Huckfelt
Gloria Regensberg
Celestia Ordaz
Casey Phillabaum
Sybeen Fletcher
Roy Hoyt
Isabel Ruiz
Toni R. Ruiz
Margaret Stout
Mark Lymer
Dave Swanson
Joe Kulek
Keith Nichter
Richard Larson
Dave Wagner
Tim Malicki
Aaron Brown
Rob Putuam
Michelle Harman-Hirsch
Robert Taylor
Anne Richardson

The following meeting notes are intended to be a summary of the discussions at the meeting.

Introduction

Peggy Fiandaca, President of Partners for Strategic Action, Inc. welcomed everyone and explained that she was hired by the City of Tempe to work with the neighborhood to complete the Northwest Tempe Community Plan. She thanked everyone for taking time to come to this meeting to understand the Northwest Tempe Community Plan planning process and schedule. She asked how many people attending had been involved in past planning efforts. The majority of people raised their hands. However, there were several folks that were new to the neighborhood planning process.

Presentation

Peggy gave an overview of the neighborhood planning history and the process proposed for the completion of the Northwest Tempe Community Plan. A handout of the PowerPoint presentation was distributed at the meeting and meeting participants received an Open House Agenda and a Comment Card to complete.

Questions/Answers

After the presentation, meeting participants asked various questions (Q) about the process, made comments (C), and the consultants offered answers (A).

Q. What is the difference between a neighborhood vision plan and a community plan?

A. A community plan is a policy document that will be used by the City of Tempe when making decisions about the Northwest Tempe area. As a result of the community plan, the Tempe General Plan may be amended to reflect the policies in the community plan. A neighborhood vision plan is the first step in identifying issues facing the neighborhood and developing a vision for the area. Past planning efforts in the Northwest Tempe neighborhood meet the guidelines for a vision plan.

Q. Is Northwest Tempe a candidate to develop a specific plan?

A. A recommendation out of the Northwest Tempe Community Plan may be to pursue a specific plan for the entire or portion of the neighborhood. The specific plan would change the city's zoning regulations.

Q. We worked on this a long time and had the rug pulled out from underneath us. Why was the previous planning effort abandoned? What assurance do we have that this plan will be completed?

A. City staff has received clear direction by City Council to complete the plan. The City Council funded a consultant to work with the neighborhood to complete the plan.

- Q. What will a community plan take into consideration?**
- A. Since the previous neighborhood planning efforts, the City of Tempe has adopted and citizens ratified a new General Plan that provide overall policy direction related to development and redevelopment within the community. The General Plan is organized by various elements such as land use, transportation, housing, redevelopment, and open space. The Northwest Tempe Community Plan will be organized in the same way to ensure that the two documents are closely coordinated.
- Q. Can previous plans be made available for review?**
- A. Yes. The ones that the City of Tempe has electronic versions of are on the city's website.
- Q. It is too contentious to call the previous City effort "the Draft Plan." It is important to use the work done by the neighborhood in past planning efforts. How will decisions be made about what actually gets incorporated into the document?**
- A. All past planning efforts and comments are being reviewed. The focus is on finding areas of common ground and determining where there might be some divergent viewpoints. It will be important to continue to have a dialogue on these divergent viewpoints. If there are issues that cannot be resolved, they might need to be pulled out of the plan until a consensus can be reached. Consensus is defined as getting to a place where everyone can live with the document even though they may not agree with every word. The goal is to get to a point where people feel the plan is better than where the neighborhood is today.
- C. We need to address the polarizing issues and not loose sight of them.**
- C. The past strategic planning processes were very successful. We were able to track the strategies back to the public comments.**
- Q. Can we have ASU representation in this process? They are right across the street.**
- A. Yes they are invited to attend.
- C. Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) for neighborhood development would be good to use here. It establishes criteria for sustainable neighborhoods.**

Q. Will we have the ability to know where in the neighborhood area people are from at public meetings?

A. Yes.

C. Look into the comments from past planning efforts.

Public Comments Received from Past Processes

A card display on the wall reflected the variety of public comments received from public meetings held in September 2002 and from the project website regarding the Draft Northwest Tempe Community Plan. Participants were asked to review the past process comments and to make comments. Following is a summary of the comments received. **PC** refers to Past Comments and **CC** refers to Current Comments received.

PC Discuss the possibility of overlays.

CC Please explain.

PC Develop incentives for neighborhood services such as a grocery store or drug store.

CC We need a grocery store! I miss IGA!

PC I advocate adding a provision to the plan that will prevent landowners from combining smaller parcels into larger parcels for development.

CC Yes (3 persons).

CC Agree. We need to prevent inappropriate density.

CC Very limiting to areas in decline and makes many commercial uses impossible.

CC Disagree. What about multi-family projects that need it a lot?

PC Understand the nature of planning to anticipate the future needs, but I believe we are over-anticipating.

CC For future development, as standards requirement to have bus pull over lanes as Tempe becomes denser in population.

PC Need affordable basic goods and services.

CC Where's the grocery store – Trader Joe's please.

CC Grocery store – still need one.

CC Neighborhood residents need to support these.

CC Grocery store! Yes on Trader Joe's.

PC Home occupations are okay if provision of an employee if off-street parking is provided.

CC Disagree.

- PC Allow accessory dwellings only as approved by neighborhood.**
CC Agree.
- PC Like the idea of cottage houses but will maintenance of the common area be a requirement of the development plan?**
CC Maybe deed restrictions or stipulations to prohibit new cottage and houses becoming all rental. Owner to live on site.
- PC Buildings that abut street must have pedestrian entrances and windows on street side.**
CC If modern business (like Starbucks) can't do this I don't think we are saying we don't want them.
- PC Ensure speed limit recommendations are legal.**
CC 18 mph speed limits.
- PC Comply with City's bike rack guidelines.**
CC Extend guidelines.
- PC Agree with requirements for enhanced landscape regulations.**
CC Regulations should emphasize desert landscaping.
CC Flood irrigation should be encouraged in all eligible area. In other areas, xeriscape must include trees.
CC Higher landscaping standards for rental single family houses.
- PC Support the notion of zeriscaping for new development.**
CC Low water use is important.
- PC Sustainability/Environment.**
CC Implement LEED-NC and LEED-ND.
- PC Identify environmentally sensitive areas within the Northwest Tempe area.**
CC Its time to address sustainability – economic, social, and environmental.
- PC Sustainable development incentives like increased density may be opening a can of worms.**
CC Density is not the problem, poor design and cheap development is.
- PC Add sensitivity to archeological sites.**
CC Agree especially on "A" Mountain.

- PC Promote environmental livability.**
CC Make environment a priority – not just trees – the whole environment.
- PC Summarize sustainable practices that can be used by developers and citizens.**
CC Is population increase really desirable?
- PC How are divergent viewpoints addressed?**
CC Yes – we need to agree on our process before we start!
- PC Poorly written, inconsistencies, process poor, does not reflect neighborhood interests, city is operating in bad faith, unfair to weight document so heavily toward development.**
CC Processes tend to bias toward developers because they get paid to attend city meetings, are available during the day, and speak the language.
- PC Staff is not responding to comments being made.**
CC Agree...In the past, city staff would not support group recommendations if they didn't agree with them. The PAAB was good example.
- PC Like Tucson they allow more community control or input for planning in the neighborhood. Have developers organize meetings for input from the neighborhood prior to submittal.**
CC Great. Yes prior to.
- PC Need to consider the issue of takings.**
CC Need to address issue of taking from the community, i.e., goods and services.
- PC Encourage economic diversity for all of Tempe.**
CC I agree especially this area.
- PC Keep Mitchell Park as a park and not a grocery store.**
CC Keep as a park and not anything else (except the building could be used for ?? – cannot read rest of comment).
- PC Opposed to the establishment of any historic overlay district. It is unfortunate that Tempe has not designated any historic districts.**
CC Overall, our historic area is very important to preserve.

- PC Treat “historic” as at least 50 years old and do not require listing on register.**
- CC Agree do not require historic inclusion. Some buildings are in major disrepair.
- CC Disagree. It would be useful to include the park and some of the commercial to improve the quality of the park.
- PC Historic preservation zoning per existing ordinance should be encouraged.**
- CC Yes (2 people).
- PC I do not want to see any commercial use for Mitchell School, or any other use that would encourage driving; discourage uses that create a “closed” facility such as storage or office.**
- CC No commercial use for Mitchell School/Park.
- CC Encourage more families, dog use, and community events.
- CC The area immediately surrounding R-1 cul-de-sac should remain less dense than R-3 with 2-story height limit.
- CC Expand the dog park and improve maintenance.
- PC Rehabilitate Mitchell School and establish community suited use.**
- CC Mitchell Park spruce up! Enlarge the dog park.
- CC Community use rather than warehouse and administrative uses would be great.
- CC Agree.
- PC Add a provision that will prevent landowners from combining smaller parcels into larger pieces for development.**
- CC Require public hearing for replat or property assemblage.
- PC Recommended height of 5 stories is too high along Mill and University.**
- CC Will impact streetscape and small mom and pop developments.
- CC Agree. Such heights would negatively impact neighborhoods.
- CC 3-5 stories along University are fine. Increased density is not desirable. No high rises.
- CC Disagree. Height is needed to provide an active street life.
- CC Disagree.
- CC 3 to 5 stories are okay – make them aesthetically pleasing. No art forms.
- PC If density is increased it should be approved by the neighborhood.**
- CC Height and density should be minimal.

- CC Agree (3 people).
- CC Disagree – the neighborhood is not a responsible negotiating body; that’s why we have elected officials.
- CC Strongly agree.
- PC Maple/Ash Redevelopment/Preservation Area.**
- CC Save Maple Ash!!
- PC I don’t believe that 5 blocks of mixed-use retail emphasis buildings along Mills Avenue is consistent with neighborhood preservation.**
- CC Agree (2 people).
- PC This neighborhood (Maple Ash) is a treasure and a link to Tempe’s history. It deserves stronger protection.**
- CC Designate Maple Ash a historic district!!
- CC Preserve Maple Ash!!
- CC The neighborhoods south of Main Street east of Mill Avenue are a treasure. Maple to ASU needs a lot of help.
- PC Don’t change the land use for Maple Ash from a majority of single-family to all multi-family.**
- CC Agree. Preserving this neighborhood is critical to Tempe.
- PC To preserve vintage neighborhood, specific plan must set down guidelines so boards, commissions, and the city council will not approve abandoning the alley or granting height variances.**
- CC Agree.
- PC We like our neighborhood Maple houses. We don’t want a transition.**
- CC Absolutely.
- CC No one asked for a transition in any public process.
- PC If mixed use is allowed parking availability will be a concern**
- CC Agree – to come to Maple would require a residential scale facing Maple.
- PC Maintain existing alley in the Maple Ash neighborhood between Mill and Maple to provide a buffer from Mill Avenue and in effect limit density and redevelopment.**
- CC The alley is an important buffer between mixed use and residential.
- PC To replace the streetscape and the 50-year old trees would remove an important piece of Tempe heritage.**
- CC Save our beautiful trees.

PC Build out north Mill Avenue and leave Mill Avenue south of University and Maple Ash alone until you run out of space.

CC I disagree with this – It is important to retain the historic homes on Mill, many of which are used for businesses.

PC Focus of attention should be on historic preservation and historic enhancement, not development or redevelopment, mixed use or increased density.

CC Agree.

PC My neighbors are alarmed at the thought of living in a “vibrant, lively, 24-hour activity zone.” Please protect us from encroachment.

CC This refers to Riverside.

PC Oppose the redevelopment and the mixed use plan for the east side of Maple Avenue.

CC Disagree. Increase street life on Mill and University Drive.

PC If buildings are allowed to be developed as described, parking will be an issue.

CC Agree.

CC I was under the impression that the east side of Ash Avenue between 10th and 13th Streets was R-2.

PC Save Maple Ash Area, no redevelopment, no mixed use, oppose redevelopment/mixed use for east side of Maple Avenue.

CC Agree!

CC Buffer is needed between Mill Avenue and Maple Ash area.

CC Residential and historic properties along Mill Avenue should also be buffered.

PC The east and north edges of the neighborhood should not be changed to mixed use or higher density and should remain as is.

CC Agree!

CC The historic streetscape along Mill Avenue should be preserved.

CC Disagree. Add activity to create a strong neighborhood edge and compliment ASU side.

PC Specific plan set tone for size and scale. No high rise (more than 2 stories).

CC This refers to existing neighborhood plan – what we wanted to work from.

- PC Eliminate all credits for open space regarding small development.**
 CC Stop using the Town Lake Park as a profit center for city government. Stop the parties and closures of the park.
- PC Agree with saving A-Mountain into perpetuity.**
 CC Agree.
 CC Absolutely yes!
- PC Expand operation of Clark Park pool and lengthen swimming pool season.**
 CC Yes! But it does need improvements.
 CC Multi-purpose building at Clark Park is too small, limited.
 CC That would be nice – needs major improvements.
- PC No commercial development along University that would encroach on Mitchell Park.**
 CC Disagree, it would be nice to add to the daily life of the park.
- PC Use PAD process to balance new open space with existing open space.**
 CC No PAD on existing R-1 zoning.
 CC No need for additional open space. Already an established community.
- PC Concur with no wireless towers in parks.**
 CC Yes to both; Jaycee Park needs pool and batting cages.
- PC Fine landlords that do not maintain property. Not affordable rentals but affordable home ownership. Be more aggressive about enforcement.**
 CC I agree!
 CC Yes!
 CC License landlords to use fees for rental code enforcement.
- PC Support – preservation of existing owner-occupied houses with infill via “back cottage houses, complemented by affordable basic goods and services such as at 1117 S. Maple Avenue.**
 CC State law in California prohibits “not allowing cottage or mother-in-law” units; encourages people to stay put and afford historic preservation.
- PC Identify student housing locations and develop a plan to address.**
 CC Provide zoning incentives for boarding houses or group living arrangements for students.

- PC** Housing goals talk about quality of life. We don't just want student housing, want long term housing residents.
- CC** Agree.
- PC** Is not appropriate to try to re-engineer an existing single family residential neighborhood.
- CC** Keep single family residential neighborhood.
- PC** Continue to consider Mill Avenue as a residential area, part of the residential core.
- CC** Not with high rises. No more towers!
- CC** Develop Mill to connect Gammage to the downtown.
- CC** Agree.
- PC** The text should discuss the manner of mixtures of housing to support the quality of life.
- CC** Offer rehab (say \$15k) money for duplex buyer/owner-if owner lives in the duplex for 5 years.
- PC** Delete mandating that the owner must reside on site for home occupations.
- CC** Why change that? Isn't that the definition of home occupation?
- CC** We want homeowners living on-site... living in their homes...less rentals.
- CC** Home occupations by definition requires on-site residents.
- PC** Expand the discussion of rental registry to include tracking of inventory and owners.
- CC** Yes! Also-amend zoning ordinance to include additional regulations for rental use in single family residential.
- CC** Yes license landlord.
- CC** Yes!
- PC** Define "crime free multi-housing program."
- CC** Get rid of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CEPTED); it ruins good neighborhoods for false sense of security.
- CC** What does this mean? How does it impact residents?
- PC** Strongly oppose any second story multi-family walk-ups.
- CC** Agree.
- CC** Disagree.

- PC Agree with the plan calling for more unique residential living that is not present in Tempe.**
CC No more "quadrangle" style ant-farms.
- PC Delete – require new housing developments to provide 10% affordable housing and design affordable housing units evenly.**
CC No – keep it or require 20%.
CC Agree – this discourages revitalization of our neighborhoods.
- PC Discourage garage dominated facades.**
CC Agree-we need front porches, not garages.
CC Agree-put them in the back or side.
- PC Pedestrian bridge across the Rio Salado Parkway is desired.**
CC Everything we can do to increase bike and pedestrian use.
CC Yes!
- PC Show pedestrian level lighting.**
CC Place more lighting on Wilson between 5th and 1st Streets.
- PC Consider narrowing a portion of University by providing on-street parking through the Northwest Tempe area.**
CC Neighborhoods around schools will respond well to light rail.
- PC Non auto transport should be the preferred and funded mode; enhance streets to support other than auto uses.**
CC Yes. Make it easy not to drive.
- PC Add vertical curbs.**
CC But don't increase pavement width. Wider pavement to "calm" traffic doesn't work.
- PC Bring light rail to the neighborhood due to land uses that are here to support it.**
CC Disagree.
- PC Bring light rail to neighborhoods that support it.**
CC Yes! Yes! Yes!
- PC I like street calming implemented on Fifth Street.**
CC Agree.
CC Agree. Do more everywhere!
CC Agree. Keep this up.

- PC** Instead of signal at Rio Salado, build pedestrian bridge at the end of Farmer.
- CC** Do both.
- PC** Fund improvements that encourage pedestrian and bike transportation.
- CC** Agree would help with traffic problem.
- PC** Consider narrowing a portion of University by providing on street parking through the Northwest Tempe area commercial district.
- CC** Agree, explore this more.
- CC** And don't widen overall pavement. It would further separate the neighborhood.
- CC** Agree. Narrowing University will benefit surrounding neighborhoods.
- PC** Recognize street rhythms created by existing lot sizes and create design guidelines that recognize and maintain the rhythm.
- CC** Like Phoenix encourage real front porches – existing housing typically on set back.
- PC** Urban Neighborhood Area. Remove the Roosevelt and Fifth Street areas. Alarmed at “living a vibrant, lively, 24-hours activity zone.”
- CC** Don't understand what this “urban” means.
- PC** Integrate public art into parks.
- CC** Agree – stop dropping boulders in to solve problems. It's like using a hammer and nail on a fine instrument.
- CC** Place more art and sculpture at public spaces. If the city has a public collection, bring them out and display them.

Comment Cards

Comment cards were distributed and meeting participants were encouraged to provide their ideas, issues, or suggestions for the planning effort. Fifteen comment cards were received. Following are the comments received from the comment cards submitted.

- I would recommend that representatives from ASU attend the planning meetings since many students rent in our neighborhoods and need to be considered in the plan. I would also like to see some Council Members in our groups to show they will support our efforts and not abandon the “plan.”
- Make available the comments associated with the strategic area plan.

- The meeting was disorganized. Peggy let one person asking questions dominate the beginning of the presentation. Keep better control of the meeting. Take questions and comments at the end of the presentation. It is important to keep control of the group presentation especially with a group of people that seem pretty angry and disappointed in the City.
- Draft community plan available on city web site. Design it so it runs as simply as possible. For example: not one long PDF.
- Make Riverside/Sunset neighborhood Strategic/Northwest Tempe Neighborhood Strategic Plan/Draft Northwest Tempe Specific Area Plans available on city web site or as a hard copy at development agencies or through neighborhood services.
- Define “livability” of the community. Mitchell Park West go solar – off the grid – use roof of Mitchell School.
- Critical Issues: R2/R3 developers always try to over-develop to get property to pencil out; need strategies to provide neighbor and city direction to real estate people at least.
- Critical Issues: With higher density, deed restrictions to limit student housing.
- Critical Issues: Existing landlords do not maintain their properties within the neighborhood context or better standards.
- The future of homes should be decided by the individuals who live in them. Please stop stripping our communities of its individuality with your plans of gentrification. We want to keep our homes. Stop building condos and lofts and leave us alone.
- Although bus service has helped with transportation within the neighborhood, there still is no grocery facility of the size of a Safeway or Bashas. There is no grocery facility within walking distance of the center of the neighborhood.
- Offer rehab money (say \$15k) for duplex buyer/owner if owner lives in the duplex for 5 years. Rehab money is already available for multi-housing. There are many developers in the Sunset neighborhood. This would help stabilize the neighborhood.

- Thanks very much for your hard work. It will be important to keep communicating with us (neighborhood residents) on both the content of the plan and the process for making it. As you've probably experienced, there is a lot of tension and mistrust.
- Please see that our plan addresses issues of sustainability and livability. We have lost our neighborhood basic goods and services. We would like our community plan to help us restore them.
- Margaret Stout referred to a "4th" Plan, preceding the draft specific area plan, and "combining" or "blending" the two strategic plans. This "4th" Plan has not been made public, appears to have been done "behind the scene", and its authorship has not been disclosed. If this be the case, its validity and credibility is suspect.
- Provide e-mail correspondence.
- Provide an update of the status of the Comprehensive Transportation Plan.
- Grocery store please (mentioned at every meeting since 1995).
- Contradictions between community plan and zoning ordinance: our plans were supposed to be our input to the development of the ordinance, comprehensive transportation plan, etc.
- Start from strategic plans not draft SAP Plan (November 2001). Throw this out.
- How are conflicts resolved? Polarized issues are already identified. Don't drop out, continue to work.
- Traceability. Be able to trace policies, etc. from final plan back to input and comments.
- Create subgroups that don't divide streets especially University Drive.
- Create focus groups for University Drive.

Next Steps

Peggy thanked everyone for attending. She encouraged everyone to sign up for one of the 3 Focus Groups that are planned. She said that meeting summary notes will be completed and included on the website. Everyone will be invited to attend a town hall meeting after the DRAFT Plan is completed. The purpose of the town hall will be to review the DRAFT Plan. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:30 p.m.

City of Tempe Staff Present:

Shauna Williams, Neighborhood Services	Jeff Kuluga, Community Relations
Elizabeth Thomas, Neighborhood Services	Diana Kaminski, Planning

Consultants:

Peggy Fiandaca, PSA, Inc.	Curt Dunham, PSA, Inc.
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